



Short Story Fiction

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2020

Arthur, Alexia. *How to Love a Jamaican: Stories*

FIC ART

Tenderness and cruelty, loyalty and betrayal, ambition and regret – Alexia Arthurs navigates these tensions to extraordinary effect in her debut collection about Jamaican immigrants and their families back home. Sweeping from close-knit island communities to the streets of New York City and Midwestern university towns, these eleven stories form a portrait of a nation, a people, and a way of life.

Berlin, Lucia. *Evening in Paradise: More Stories*

FIC BER

Lucia Berlin, earned comparisons to Raymond Carver, Grace Paley, Alice Munro, and Anton Chekhov. This is a careful selection from Berlin's remaining posthumously published stories—twenty-two gems that showcase the gritty glamour that made readers fall in love with her. From Texas to Chile, Mexico to New York City, Berlin finds beauty in the darkest places and darkness in the seemingly pristine.

Hurley, Kameron. *Meet Me in the Future: Stories*

FIC HUR

When renegade author Kameron Hurley takes you to the future, be prepared for the unexpected. Yes, it will be dangerous, frequently brutal, and often devastating. But it's also savagely funny, deliriously strange, and absolutely brimming with adventure. In these edgy, unexpected tales, a body-hopping mercenary avenges his pet elephant, and an orphan falls in love with a sentient starship. Fighters ally to power a reality-bending engine, and a swamp-dwelling introvert tries to save the world—from her plague-casting former wife.

Groff, Lauren. *Florida*

FIC GRO

The stories in this collection span characters, towns, decades, even centuries, but *Florida*—its landscape, climate, history, and state of mind—becomes its gravitational center: an energy, a mood, as much as a place of residence. Groff transports the reader, then jolts us alert with a crackle of wit, a wave of sadness, a flash of cruelty, as she writes about loneliness, rage, family, and the passage of time. With shocking accuracy and effect, she pinpoints the moments and decisions and connections behind human pleasure and pain, hope and despair, love and fury—the moments that make us alive.

Hill, Joe. *Full Throttle: Stories*

FIC HIL

In this masterful collection of short fiction, Joe Hill dissects timeless human struggles in 13 relentless tales of supernatural suspense, including "In The Tall Grass", one of two stories co-written with Stephen King. Featuring two previously unpublished stories and a brace of shocking chillers, *Full Throttle* is a darkly imagined odyssey through the complexities of the human psyche. Hypnotic and disquieting, it mines our tormented secrets, hidden vulnerabilities, and basest fears and demonstrates this exceptional talent at his very best.

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Hitting a Straight Lick with a Crooked Stick*

FIC HUR

An outstanding collection of stories about love and migration, gender and class, racism and sexism that proudly reflect African American folk culture. Brought together for the first time in one volume, they include eight of Hurston's "lost" Harlem stories, which were found in forgotten periodicals and archives. These stories challenge conceptions of Hurston as an author of rural fiction and include gems that flash with her biting,

satiric humor, as well as more serious tales reflective of the cultural currents of Hurston's world.

Lively, Penelope. *The Purple Swamp Hen & Other Stories*

FIC LIV

Many stories here feature women getting on in age, reflecting on their long and interesting lives. In "Old as the Hills," two women meet for lunch at a quiet restaurant to discuss what they have in common—namely, a recently deceased husband who one stole from the other. In "License To Kill," 84-year-old Pauline is out on a shopping trip with her young minder, who has fixed ideas about her elderly charge, until she learns that Pauline once worked as a spy. Lively remains an acutely perceptive observer of the human condition. This charming collection, ranging from ancient Pompeii to modern-day London, is proof that her gifts have only ripened with age.

Means, David. *Instructions for a Funeral: Stories*

FIC MEA

Means has won himself an international reputation as one of the most innovative short fiction writers working today: an "established master of the form." Means is branching out beyond the explorations of violence and trauma with which he is often identified, prominently displaying his sly humor and his inimitable way of telling tales that deliciously wind up to punch the reader in the heart. With each story Means pushes into new territory, writing with tenderness and compassion about fatherhood, marriage, a homeless brother, the nature of addiction, and the death of a friend at the hands of a serial-killer nurse.

Millet, Lydia. *Fight No More: Stories*

FIC MIL

This wonderfully original collection proves once again that Pulitzer Prize finalist Lydia Millet is "the American writer with the funniest, wisest grasp on how we fool ourselves" (Chicago Tribune). With crackling satire and surprising tenderness, Millet introduces an indelible cast of untidy teens, beastly men, and strong-minded women whose stories begin to outline the fate of one particular family being torn apart by forces they recognize but cannot control. Millet's intellect and beautiful prose deliver profound insight into human behavior, from the ordinary to the bizarre, and draws startling contrasts between house and home.

Oates, Joyce Carol. *Beautiful Days*

FIC OAT

In these stories, as elsewhere in her fiction, Joyce Carol Oates exhibits her fascination with the social, psychological, and moral boundaries that govern our behavior—until the hour when they do not.

Scott, Rion Amilcar. *The World doesn't Require You: Stories*

FIC SCO

The arrival of a generational talent, Scott shatters rigid genre lines to explore larger themes of religion, violence, and love—all told with sly humor and a dash of magical realism. As the book builds to its finish with "Special Topics in Loneliness Studies", a fully-realized novella, two unhinged professors grapple with hugely different ambitions, and the reader comes to appreciate the intricacy of the world Scott has created—one where fantasy and reality are eternally at war.

Sittenfeld, Curtis. *You think It, I'll Say it*

FIC SIT

Curtis Sittenfeld has established a reputation as a sharp chronicler of the modern age who humanizes her subjects even as she skewers them. Now, with this first collection of short fiction, her "astonishing gift for creating characters that take up residence in readers' heads" (*The Washington Post*) is showcased like never before. Throughout the ten stories, Sittenfeld upends assumptions about class, relationships, and gender roles in a nation that feels both adrift and viscerally divided.

Smith, Zadie. *Grand Union: Stories*

FIC SMI

In her first short story collection, Smith combines her power of observation and her inimitable voice to mine the fraught and complex experience of life in the modern world. Smith presents a dizzyingly rich and varied collection of fiction. Moving exhilaratingly across genres and perspectives, from the historic to the vividly current to the slyly dystopian, *Grand Union* is a sharply alert and prescient collection about time and place, identity and rebirth, the persistent legacies that haunt our present selves and the uncanny futures that rush up to meet us.

Wilson, Kevin. *Baby You're Gonna Be Mine*

FIC WIL

"Baby, You're Gonna Be Mine," the title story, is about a narcissistic rock star who moves back home during a rough patch. These stories all build on each other in strange and remarkable ways, showcasing Wilson's crackling wit and big heart. Filled with imagination and humor, *Baby, You're Gonna Be Mine* is an exuberant collection of captivating and charmingly bizarre stories that promise to burrow their way into your heart and soul.